

IDAHO BARLEY NEWSBRIEF

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Idaho barley check-off dollars at work...

For the 7th consecutive year, the IBC will **sponsor grain marketing / risk management workshops for Idaho grain producers.** In 2008-09, we will collaborate with the UI on new farm business management schools in two locations and will offer grain marketing workshops in several additional sites.

Since 2001, we have received more than \$83,000 in grant funding to provide this type of training to more than 1,300 producers.

North American barley research conference zeroes in on winter malting barley production potential in Idaho

More than 80 leading barley research scientists and industry leaders gathered this week in Madison, Wisconsin for the 19th Triennial North American Barley Researchers Conference. One of the first topics on the three-day program was a close-up look at a field study conducted by University of Idaho cereal agronomist Juliet Windes, Idaho Falls/Aberdeen, to evaluate winter survivability of Charles, a new two-row winter malting barley variety released by Dr. Don Obert, USDA Agricultural Research Service barley breeder in Aberdeen. Limited commercial production during the past two years has shown Charles' yield potential is at least 25 to 35% above spring cultivars in the Magic Valley and other areas of the state with milder winter conditions.

Dr. Juliet Windes' evaluated the winter hardiness of two winter varieties - Charles malting and Eight Twelve feed barley - planted at the UI Aberdeen research farm in fall 2007. Dr. Windes' findings included:

- ♦ Planting date is important, with an earlier date allowing for a larger crown and healthier plant stand going into dormancy.
- ♦ Increasing seeding rate beyond 800,000 seeds/acre does not significantly increase yield potential.
- ♦ Planting in a furrow with protective ridges significantly improves winter survivability; this is a common planting practice for dryland winter wheat in southern Idaho. This type of seedbed will help improve winter survival and reduce the required seeding rate.

2009 commercial production - At least three Idaho malting and brewing companies have contracted for commercial production of Charles winter malting barley in 2009. To help boost this commercialization effort, the IBC has increased its funding support for Dr. Obert's winter malting barley breeding program. This year, Dr. Obert will release a second winter malting barley called Endeavor, which has slight yield improvement over Charles. Endeavor will enter plant scale brewing evaluations in the next two years.

1988-2008
Celebrating 20 Years of Service
to Idaho Barley Producers

Market Buzz...

Using barley in fish diets - On October 23, commercial fish farmers were invited to participate in a workshop sponsored by the University of Idaho Cooperative Extension and College of Southern Idaho at the CSI fish hatchery in Twin Falls to review the technical feasibility of using barley based diets for trout in the future. Idaho ranks 1st in U.S. trout, producing more than 50 million pounds annually.

UI scientists reported on the findings from a commercial scale trout feeding study conducted last summer, comparing traditional fish meal feeds with new diets that substitute 25% of the fish-meal with Clearwater low phytate barley. Study findings showed that trout growth and quality were not adversely affected with the diet changes, while feeding costs were reduced. A blind taste testing at the October 23 workshop demonstrated to Idaho fish farmers that flavor will not be affected.

Interest in using plant based diets is being driven by dramatically higher fish meal costs.

Policy Watch - Competitive rail legislation makes headway in 110th Congress

Major progress was made in the 110th Congress by the Alliance for Rail Competition and a large consortium of national and state agricultural organizations and private businesses to advance the 2008 Rail Competition and Service Act (H.R. 2125, S. 953). Idaho Senators Larry Craig and Mike Crapo and Congressman Mike Simpson were cosponsors of this important legislation. Although time ran out for this bill to be considered this year, significant headway was made to elevate rail competition issues to the front burner.

In late September, more than 40 organizations (including the Idaho Barley Commission, Idaho Wheat Commission and Idaho Grain Producers Association) sent a joint letter to U.S. Representative James Oberstar, chairman of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, urging him to make competitive rail issues a high priority in the next congress.

There is an outside chance that Congress will hold a lame-duck session after the November election to consider a second economic stimulus bill, which could include infrastructure funding for state and local governments. This effort might open the door for rail infrastructure funding, which in turn, could provide an opportunity to address rail competition issues.

The key issues included in the Rail Competition and Service Act include:

1. Clarifies U.S. rail transportation policy to ensure effective competition among rail carriers;
2. Eliminates so-called "bottlenecks" by requiring carriers to quote a rate for any two points on the carrier's system where traffic originates, terminates, or can be interchanged;
3. Creates competitive rail service at switching points;
4. Eliminates paper barriers that prevent short line carriers from providing shippers with access to competitive service on major rail systems;
5. Establishes a mechanism for the Surface Transportation Board to declare states or areas within states "areas of inadequate rail competition" that would trigger specific remedies to anti-competitive conduct;
6. Establishes "Final Offer Arbitration" to settle disputes involving movement of agricultural commodities, including timber, paper and fertilizer. Under this process, the shipper and rail carrier would each present their best offer and a neutral arbitrator would choose between the two positions.

We believe Final Offer Arbitration offers meaningful leverage for agricultural shippers who are captive to a single railroad. Other captive shippers besides agriculture now believe FOA will work equally well for them

U.S. agriculture has been represented on ARC board by Idaho grain leaders

- Evan Hayes, former District 3 barley commissioner from Soda Springs, served on the executive committee of ARC for the past five years. Evan stepped down from this ARC post this fall and has been replaced by Wayne Hurst, a Declo wheat producer who has been elected secretary-treasurer of the National Association of Wheat Growers. Both Evan and Wayne testified before the 110th Congress on grain transportation and rail competition issues.

IGPA Report

Coalition for Idaho Water Monitors Court Proceedings on Salmon

The IGPA continues its involvement as a partner in the “Coalition for Idaho Water”, established to monitor and take any necessary actions to defend the dam and lock infrastructure along the Snake and Columbia Basin river systems. In an effort to protect salmon and steelhead, environmental activist groups are taking legal action to block or overturn the latest federal biological opinion, which they believe jeopardizes the health and welfare of the fish. This case focuses on the downstream dams along the Columbia River Basin, but has implications for the Upper Snake River Basin.

Additional briefings will occur throughout the fall, including specific requests by the environmental groups as to how U.S. District Court Judge James Redden should adjudicate the spill, flow augmentation, etc. of the river system in 2009.

Response briefs were due on October 24. It appears that the states of Idaho, Washington, and Montana will partner in submitting a joint brief in opposition to the motion made by Oregon and the environmentalist groups. Their motion for injunctive relief is due on November 10, 2008. Oral arguments are set in front of Judge Redden in his Portland courtroom on January 16, 2009.

IGPA and the Coalition for Idaho Water are currently reviewing the environmentalists' filings and will continue to monitor the litigation, including consideration of potential impacts on the Upper Snake River Basin in Idaho, and will do whatever is necessary and prudent to protect our reservoir supplies.

Idaho State Department of Agriculture Proposes Changes to Commodity Indemnity Fund

In response to the heightened potential of Idaho warehouse failures, the Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) is proposing statutory changes to two sections of the Idaho law regulating bonded grain warehouses, commodity dealers, and the Commodity Indemnity Fund (CIF).

This proposal seeks to tighten the bonding requirements that warehouses must comply with to remain licensed in Idaho. The proposal also includes a 3-year producer and CIF liability limit for claims that exceed the CIF fund balance and establishes a minimum for Commodity Dealer bonds, among other items.

Currently, the IGPA has received negative feedback from smaller, independent elevators and warehouse facilities. The ISDA has formally submitted the proposal to the Governor's office and relevant state legislators. ISDA Warehouse Section Chief, Dave Ogden, has agreed to hold meetings in Eastern Idaho prior to the 2009 State Legislative Session to discuss the issue with concerned stakeholders.

Oregon-Idaho Grains Convention scheduled December 10-12 at Coeur d'Alene Resort -

IGPA will partner with the Oregon Wheat League in sponsoring our annual grain producer convention. This year's convention will feature ag policy and grain marketing experts, Dr. Barry Finchbaugh and Ross Korves, along with several workshops on topics like direct seeding, grain markets, risk management, wheat and barley research, transportation and carbon sequestration.

Register by November 17 online at www.idahograin.org.